

Pinto Valley Mine Final EIS and Draft Record of Decision Available

The Tonto National Forest, an administrative unit of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, announces the release of a final environmental impact statement (FEIS) and draft record of decision (ROD) for the Pinto Valley Mine. The FEIS evaluates and discloses the potential environmental effects of the proposed 2016 mining plan of operations (MPO) submitted by Pinto Valley Mining Corp (PVMC) for the Pinto Valley Mine. The MPO would be approved under regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 228. The Forest Service has reviewed PVMC's proposed MPO for compliance with regulations governing the use of surface resources in conjunction with the proposed mining operations on National Forest System (NFS) lands. The Responsible Official, Tonto Forest Supervisor, has considered the effects of each alternative analyzed in the FEIS. The draft ROD selects the proposed action subject to incorporation of monitoring and mitigation measures identified in the draft ROD to minimize potential adverse impacts.

The Pinto Valley Mine is an existing open pit copper and molybdenum mine located approximately 8 miles west of Miami, Arizona in Gila County. PVMC's MPO proposes to expand mining operations onto NFS lands to access mineralization that extends onto claims on NFS lands, to extend the mine life for approximately 19 years, to address existing Open Pit slope instability in the southwestern portion of the pit, and to consolidate prior authorizations that are reasonably incident to extraction, transportation, and processing of mineral deposits on its mining claims.

The FEIS, draft ROD, and supporting documentation are available online at <http://pintovalleymineeis.us/>.

How to File an Objection

The FEIS and draft ROD are subject to 36 CFR 218, subparts A and B, "Project-Level Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process". Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding this project proposal and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities for comment (36 CFR 218.8(c)). Specific written comments should be within the scope of the proposed action, with a direct relationship to the proposed action, and include supporting reasons for the responsible official to consider (36 CFR 218.2). Objections must be submitted within 45 calendar days following the publication of this legal notice in the official newspaper of record, the Arizona Capitol Times. The date this legal notice is published is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. The time to file an objection cannot be extended in accordance with 36 CFR 218.6(d). Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframes provided by any other source. It is the objector's responsibility to ensure evidence of timely receipt (36 CFR 218.9).

Objections, including attachments, must be addressed to the Reviewing Officer, Regional Forester, filed via mail or express delivery to 333 Broadway Boulevard SE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102; by facsimile to: (505) 842-3800; or by email to objections-southwestern-regional-office@usda.gov. An automated response will confirm the electronic objection has been received. If an automated response is not received, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely filing by other means. Electronic objections must be submitted in Microsoft Word, portable document format (PDF), or rich text format (RTF). The subject line for electronic submissions should contain the words "Pinto Valley Mine".

Eligible objections must be filed, in writing, with the Reviewing Officer of the project, and must be open to public inspection during the objection process. At a minimum, an objection must include the following (36 CFR 218.8(d)):

- (1) Objector's name and address as defined in 36 CFR 218.2, with a telephone number, if available.
- (2) Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection).
- (3) When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector as defined in 36 CFR 218.2. Verification of the identity of the lead objector must be provided upon request or the reviewing officer will designate a lead objector as provided in 36 CFR 218.5(d).
- (4) The name of the proposed project, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name of the national forest on which the proposed project will be implemented.
- (5) A description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider.
- (6) A statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunities for comment (36 CFR 218.8(c)).

Incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in 36 CFR 218.8(b).